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Yolo  
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August 16, 2000

Mr. Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director  
Cal-Fed Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Final Programmatic EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Ritchie.

As a farmer in Yolo and Solano County, I am concerned with the final Cal-Fed EIS/EIR released July 21. I respectfully request you give us more time to review and comment on your document. It is much too large to digest and much too complex to understand as well as it comes right when we are busy harvesting our crops. I also request you hold hearings to explain what the Cal-Fed program will mean to us.

Through this entire process, I have been concerned about the loss of farmland, loss of water for agriculture and the lack of progress on increasing water storage. As California's population continues to grow and the environment continues to require more water, that water should come from newly developed storage, not from farmers

Water for farms is used to grow plants for food and fiber. Those plants give off oxygen and help clean the air. Farming also provides wildlife habitat while producing food. I continue to pay taxes on that land, survive on the income as well as provide jobs for my employees. This farmland has been in my family for generations. It is sustainable. I am not destroying the environment. I am helping to preserve it.

Do we really want to lose thousands of acres of farmland in California and lose the habitat it provides for numerous animals and plants? Right now the government owns about half the land in California, yet 75 percent of the wildlife habitat is on private land. Why do you think that is? I believe I have an answer. The animals like what we are doing. Our land and water is well managed and cared for. When the government

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decides to buy land because of a particular species, that species often goes elsewhere because the government fails to manage the land properly for habitat.

Cal-fed has had almost a year to develop the final Cal-Fed EIS/EIR and release it to the public. Yet Cal-Fed has given one month to respond to these plans and right in the middle of harvest! Is this by design? These issues are just too important and the ramifications too serious for us to rush through this process.

Again, I request you grant additional time for comments and hold public hearing before you implement the plan. I would suggest a 2-3 month delay. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Stan Lester

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Senator Barbara Boxer  
Rep. Doug Ose  
Yolo County Board of Supervisors

Governor Gray Davis  
State Senator K. Maurice Johannessen  
Assembly Member Richard Dickerson  
Assembly Member Helen Thomson